

## Collaboration and Prioritization of Minnesota Interface Projects

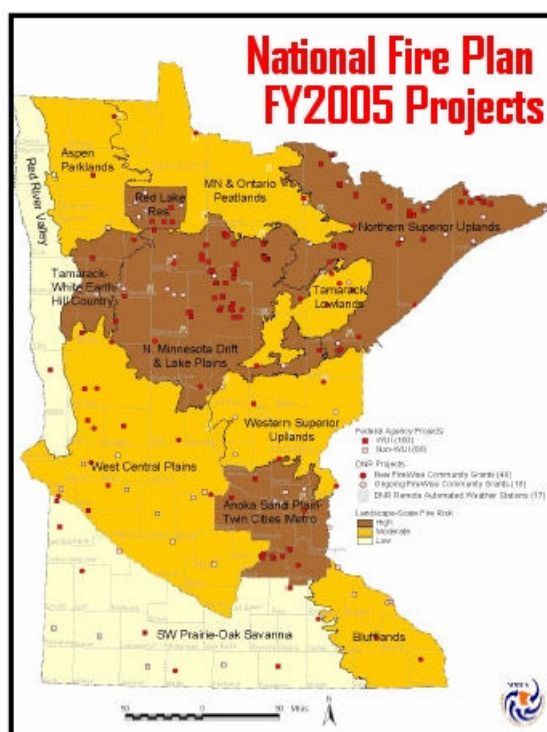
The Minnesota Incident Command System (MNICS) Prescribed Fire and Fuels Working Team has used collaboration and new technology to prioritize National Fire Plan projects in the wildland/urban interface areas of Minnesota. The MNICS Task Force determined that the projects meet agency priorities. The team used the following GIS Covers in the prioritization process:

- Ecological Classification System (ECS) Sections
- Ecological Classification Subsections
- Fire Occurrence (1985-2000) all agencies
- GAP Landcover crosswalked to Behave fuel models
- Census 2000 Housing Unit Density

The Working Team used Ecological Classification System Sections (with some adjustments) to divide the state into ten sections. Each section was then evaluated against the four factors recommended in the NASF Prioritization Guideline Memo to determine the relative degree of exposure each community (landscape) faced.

The four factors are:

- Fire Occurrence
- Hazard
- Values Protected
- Protection Capabilities



The Working Team then developed specific criteria within each of the four factors from which adjective ratings (high, moderate, low) were assigned.

A summary rating (high, moderate, low) was subsequently assigned to each of the ten Ecological Classification System Sections. The Working Team used GIS to overlay existing fuels projects onto the ten ECS sections.

Current interface projects consistently fall within ECS sections that were assigned a high adjective rating, and it's expected that future projects can be evaluated in similar fashion.

The ten ECS sections and the prioritization method developed by the Work-ing Team will be an effective method for prioritizing projects, identifying focus areas, and identifying changes to the Communities at Risk list.



---

**Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Wildland Fire Management**

Each year the Working Team will produce an executive summary for the State Forester and MNICS Task Force to summarize fuels projects, Firewise work, local risk assessments, mitigation plans, and grants.